

WHAT IS COVID-19?



A COMMUNITY HEALTH GUIDE

to understanding
COVID-19



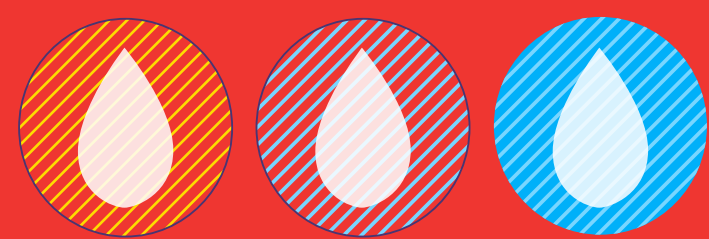
Harris County
Public Health
Building a Healthy Community



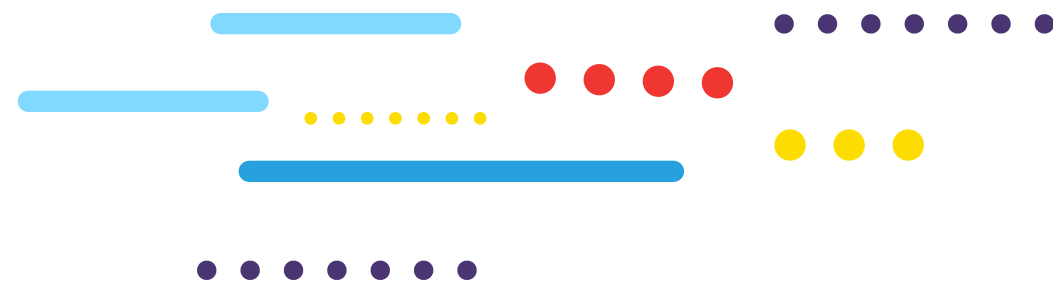
WHAT IS COVID-19?



The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that causes respiratory illness. First identified in Wuhan, China, in 2019, COVID-19 belongs to a large family of viruses named coronaviruses.

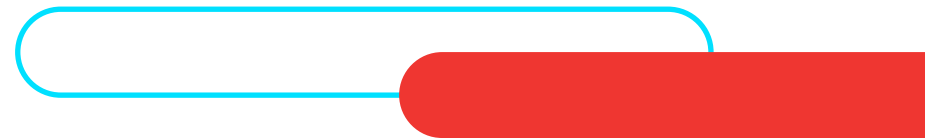


HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?



RESPIRATORY DROPLETS:

COVID-19 is spread mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets released in the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.





HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

Close contact (6 ft or 2 m) with someone who has the virus.

HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?



OBJECTS & SURFACES: The virus can enter your mouth, nose, and eyes if you touch the same object or surface as someone infected and then touch your face.

WHO IS AT HIGHER RISK?



Anyone can contract COVID-19. Still, the possibility of severe illness and hospitalization is higher for some members of our community. Factors that increase risk for severe illness:

- Age: 60 years or older
- Chronic health conditions: Heart or lung disease, diabetes, obesity, etc.
- Weakened immune systems: Autoimmune disorders, cancer or dialysis patients, pregnant women, smokers, etc.



Many African Americans may have serious underlying health conditions that increase the risk of severe illness or potential hospitalization from a COVID-19 infection. Some may also have less access to care through lower rates of insurance coverage, bias from medical providers, mistrust of the healthcare system and distance from medical facilities.



**WHY IS THE
AFRICAN AMERICAN
COMMUNITY
AT HIGHER RISK?**



WHO IS AT HIGHER RISK?



Many African Americans work in essential, frontline jobs such as food services, transportation, and home healthcare, putting them in close contact with other people.

If you are unable to work from home - limit exposure to other people and follow public health guidance on how to protect yourself in the workplace.

STAY HOME & AVOID CONTACT:

Stay home as much as possible and only leave the house for essential errands like groceries, medications, medical appointments or work.

Many African American neighborhoods lack quality grocery stores or businesses that more closely follow COVID-19 sanitizing, social distancing, and capacity limits.



HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

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HAND HYGIENE:

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol listed on the label.



FACE COVERINGS:

Wear a face covering in public.

You should wash cloth face coverings after each use.
To properly clean, wash with warm water in the washing machine.

Do NOT place face coverings on children under the age of two, anyone who has trouble breathing or who can't remove the covering on their own.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?





HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE:

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing means limiting your activities in public or with others that you do not live with. Avoid crowds and close contact – try to stay at least 6 ft (2m) from other people.



WHY IS SOCIAL DISTANCING IMPORTANT?

Social distancing is the best way to slow the spread of the virus. It helps protect the people we love and care about. You may have less risk personally, but taking such steps will benefit the whole community. You can infect your parents or grandparents, children, neighbors, coworkers, and even people traveling on the bus!

I'M HEALTHY, DO I STILL NEED TO SOCIAL DISTANCE?

A person can spread COVID-19 to other people before having symptoms. This type of spread is called pre-symptomatic; it can take 2 – 14 days before a person has symptoms. A person who isn't showing any COVID-19 symptoms (asymptomatic) can also spread the virus to other people.



HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

CLEAN & DISINFECT:

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as counters, tables, doorknobs, cell phones, bathroom fixtures, using EPA-approved cleaners.

On the product, label look for

- “Human coronavirus” in the list of bacteria and viruses
- “EPA Reg. No.” followed by a series of numbers



HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

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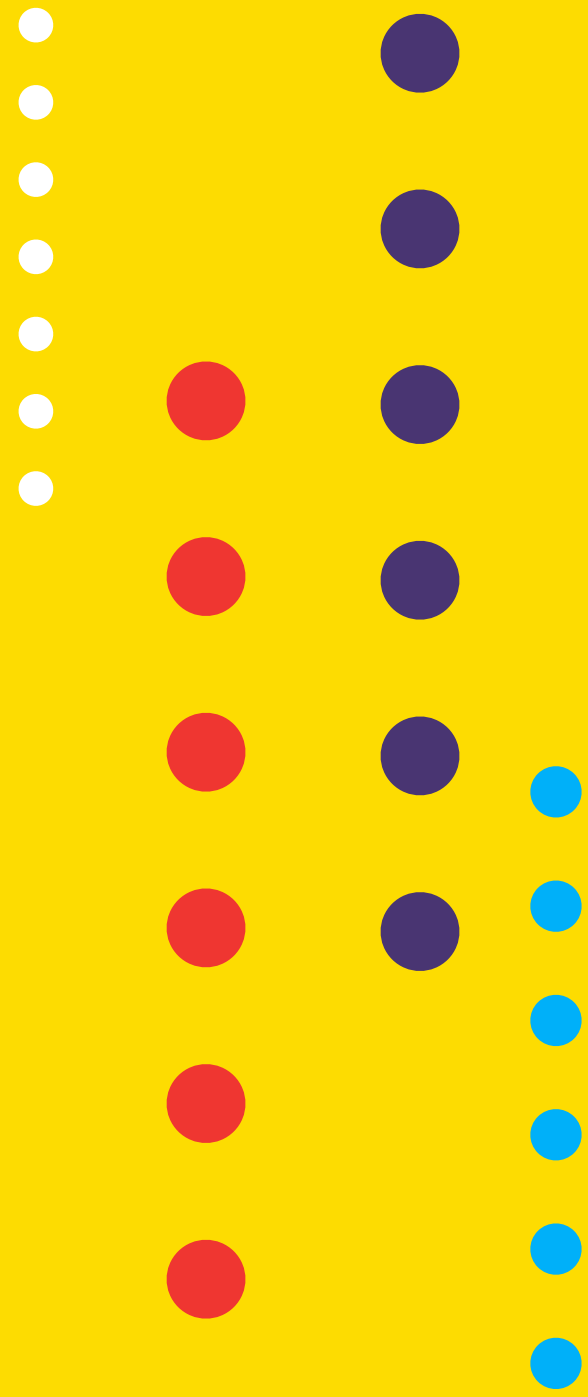


Workers without paid sick leave may be more likely to continue working even while feeling sick for fear of losing their job. If you can't work due to COVID-19 illness, help may be available through the Family First Coronavirus Response Act. Check with your manager or human resources department to determine eligibility.

WHAT IF I FEEL SICK?

- **Stay home:** People with mild symptoms can usually get better at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor:** Call your doctor before going to their office. If you don't have a healthcare provider, call the Ask-My- Nurse line **713.634.1110**

Find a health center near you using the Health Resources & Service Administration (HRSA) website www.findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/



WHAT IF I FEEL SICK?



Monitor your symptoms

People with COVID-19 may experience mild to severe respiratory illness, and any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (100.4°F or 38°C)
- Cough
- Chills or body aches
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

GET MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Confusion or inability to wake up
- Bluish lips or face
- High fever (above 104°F or 42°C)



WHAT IF I FEEL SICK?

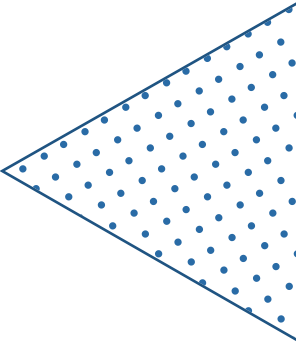
- **Stay away from others:** Separate yourself from other people or pets in your home. Stay in a specific “sick room” and use a separate bathroom, if possible—clean high-touch areas in your “sick room” and bathroom. Let someone else clean other areas of the house.
- **Wear a mask or face covering:** Cover your mouth and nose, anytime you leave the “sick room.” Anytime someone enters the “sick room,” both persons should wear a mask.
- **Avoid sharing personal items:** Do not share dishes, utensils, glasses, cups, towels or bedding when you are sick. Always make sure to wash your household items with soap and water.

WHAT IF I FEEL SICK?



Have a plan for how your household will care for a sick family member.

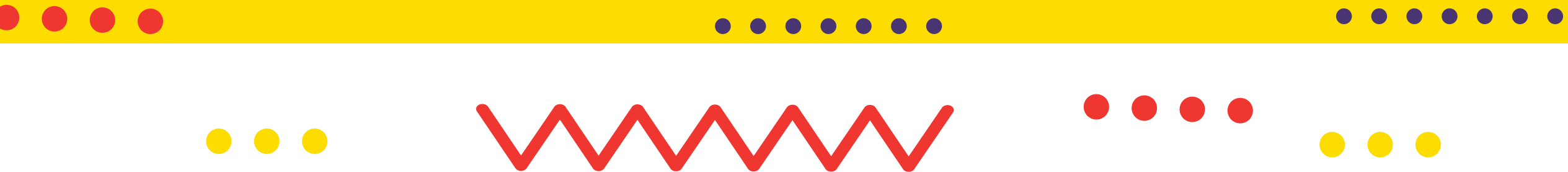
- Identify a person who can care for small children or older household members if the primary caretaker gets sick.
- Create an emergency kit with at least two weeks' worth of food, medicine, and other home care supplies.



WHAT IF I FEEL SICK?

Isolation: Separates sick people with an infectious disease from people who are not sick.

Quarantine: Separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to an infectious disease to see if they become sick.



Multigenerational households are common, making it challenging to protect older family members or isolate those who are sick.

GET TESTED!!!

If you believe you have been exposed to COVID-19 or you develop COVID-19 symptoms. FREE testing is available at hcphtx.org or by calling 832.927.7575.

Get tested about 5 days after attending events with a higher chance of spreading COVID-19. Testing too early can result in a false-negative result.



CAN PETS BECOME INFECTED OR SPREAD COVID-19?



There is a small number of animals, including cats and dogs, with confirmed cases of COVID-19. The risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is low. CDC recommends keeping pets isolated from people that have a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Identify someone who can take care of your pet. Have an emergency kit for your pet ready-to-go, with at least two weeks' worth of food, medication and preventatives.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

It is normal to feel, anxious, confused, scared, sad, or angry during a crisis. Social stigma may undermine prevention efforts and increase levels of chronic and toxic stress.

- Stay connected with family and friends. Check on older people and those living alone
- Maintain a healthy diet, sleep, and exercise schedule
- Limit time watching or listening to the news and social media use
- Draw on sources of support religious, spiritual, or cultural sources of support




If any of these feelings interfere with your daily life, contact a mental health provider or call the Texas COVID Support Line at 833-986-1919 for free.

Find other mental health resources at
<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator>



VIRUSES DON'T DISCRIMINATE AND NEITHER SHOULD WE

- COVID-19 doesn't recognize race, nationality, or ethnicity
 - Wearing a mask does not mean that a person is ill
 - You can stop the stigma. Only share accurate information
 - Correct your social circle if you hear, see, or read misinformation or harassment
 - Show compassion and support for those more closely impacted
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SOURCES

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